REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested.

1. Interview Summary

At the outset, applicants undersigned attorney appreciates the time and courtesies extended by Examiner Listvoyb and Supervisory Examiner Sergent during the personal interview of April 24, 2008. The substance of the discussion during the interview is adequately reflected in the Examiner Interview Summary Record of that date and thus further comment on the same is believed to be unnecessary.

2. Discussion of Claim Amendments

The claim set presented above represents a clean version of the amended claim set submitted with the applicants' responsive amendment dated October 17, 2007. No further amendments have been made to such claims. As such, claims 1-8, 10 and 12-13 remain pending herein for which favorable reconsideration and allowance are solicited.

3. Response to Art-Based Rejection

The only issues remaining to be resolved in this application are the continued allegations that the claims are unpatentable over Berger et al (WO 9724389 = USP 5,859,177). Specifically, prior pending claims 1, 3-8, 10 and 12 have attracted a rejection under 35 USC §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Berger et al, while 2 and 13 attracted a rejection under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly "obvious" from Berger et al and Dujari et al (WO 9823666 = USP 5,955,569). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants again note that Berger et al's one-step process is not at all anticipatory of the present invention. Nor does such a one-step process render obvious the present invention as defined in independent claim 1. However, even assuming

arguendo that the process parameters 2) and 3) identified in the Official Action at page 3, lines 9-12 could be read to correspond to steps (a) and (b) as defined in the present applicants' claims, then the present invention would not be the result. Specifically, practicing the process parameters disclosed by Berger et al would most certainly ***not*** yield a polyamide which has a viscosity number VN_{int} at the end of step (a) which is at most 90% of the viscosity number VN_{end} at the end of step (b).

The applicants' conclusion on this point is supported fully by the data presented in the attached Statutory Declaration of co-inventor Rudy Rulkens submitted pursuant to 37 CFR §1.132 (the "Rulkens Declaration"). Hence, the data in the Rulkens Declaration unquestionably establishes that the requirements of the presently claimed invention that VN_{int} at the end of step (a) be at most 90% of the viscosity number VN_{end} at the end of step (b) are ***not*** inherently present in the process parameters disclosed in Berger et al. As such, Berger et al cannot anticipate or render obvious the presently claimed invention.

Claims 2 and 13 are patentable for the same reasons as noted above. Thus, while Dujari et al is noted with interest, it fails to cure the deficiencies of Berger et al discussed above. As such, the rejection advanced under 35 USC §103(a) must likewise be withdrawn.

Every effort has been made to advance prosecution of this application to allowance. Therefore, in view of the remarks above and evidence of record, applicants suggest that all claims are in condition for allowance and Official Notice of the same is solicited.

Should any small matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the Applicants' undersigned attorney so that the same may be resolved without the need for an additional written action and reply.

An early and favorable reply on the merits is awaited.

4. Fee Authorization

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, in the fee(s) filed, or asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Account No. 14-1140.

Respectfully submitted,

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